How Hanoi and the Viet Cong See It, P. 3

The Words Were Hardly Out of His Mouth

"The targets are military targets: military lines of communication, military barracks, military depots. There has been no miscellaneous bombing of any old target in North Vietnam. . . . The targets have been directly related to a campaign of infiltration."

—McGeorge Bundy on CBS, Aug. 23.

"Saigon—U.S. planes bombed a dam and hydroelectric power plant in North Vietnam twice over the week-end, a U.S. military spokesman reported today. . . . It was the first attack on a dam in North Vietnam."

—AP in Washington Star, Aug. 23.

"Destruction of the dams risks the flooding of the rice crops, which are gathered from June to November, and rendering difficult irrigation for future harvests."

—Le Monde (Paris) Aug. 24.

"The bombing of the dam . . . raised the question whether there was any consideration of attacking one of North Vietnam's most vulnerable points, the complex system of dikes in the Red River delta. . . . Some observers believe widespread destruction of dikes could devastate the most populous part of North Vietnam and cause serious famine."

—Chas. Mohr from Saigon, N.Y. Times Aug. 24.

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A Fresh Look At Lyndon Johnson

I returned to Washington after a month's vacation to find a new mood of cautious optimism. Desperation has been replaced by a little hope in those circles of the capital concerned with peace. This has been accompanied by a re-evaluation of Lyndon Johnson where there had been only bitterness before. The change is due to many factors. One is his extraordinary accomplishments in the field of social legislation; were it not for Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, Johnson would be the hero today of the left-of-center. Not since FDR has so much reform legislation been won from Congress. This and his whole-hearted commitment to the Negro struggle for full equality have been overshadowed by the fear of war. Six months ago he seemed to be on a collision course; now he seems to be shifting in an effort to find a way out. The most dramatic evidence of this is the new attitude toward the United Nations: the appointment of Mr. Justice Goldberg as Stevenson's successor, the sudden elevation of this third rate job to first rank importance, and the swift backdown on the "peacekeeping expenses" issue which had deadlocked the organization for a year. This fresh and energetic action was Johnson at his best.

Filling the Vacuum of Rusk

Viewed from abroad, Mr. Justice Goldberg's shift from the Court to a post in which Adlai Stevenson atrophied, at first looked absurd: the transformation of a first-rate judge into a State Department errand boy and mouthpiece. But a closer look in Washington leads one to revise this view. By putting a new and important face in the United Nations post, Johnson was able to deflect attack from the necessary climb-down on the dues controversy. The effort to use this as a club against the Soviet Union was a piece of cold war idiocy from the first, since the General Assembly is no longer controlled by the West and the U.S. too might some day find itself asked to pay for a peace-keeping operation it considered contrary to its national interests. The State Department, with characteristic genius, had painted itself into a corner and did not know how to get out. Johnson did what he will have to do some day on Vietnam and that is simply and plainly admit a mistake. The razzle-dazzle of putting a Supreme Court Justice in the UN post somehow made an ignominious defeat look like a bit of triumphant pageantry. The appointment also represents an upgrading of the United Nations, in Johnson's anxiety to find some way out of the Vietnamese morass, and a major change in his foreign policy team. Goldberg, like Johnson, is very much a non-ideological and pragmatic "operator," not afraid to take risks and not conditioned to cold war sterility. He helps to fill that vacuum represented by Secretary of State Rusk, the capital's most cultivated nullity; Goldberg is neither a cookie-pusher nor a Hamlet and he speaks Johnson's practical wheeler-dealer language. He gave up his high post because he believed he could make a contribution thereby to peace.

His successor, the first Johnson appointment to the Supreme Court, is a man who by all indications should develop into a great liberal Justice. The nomination is a reward for lifelong

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Unreported Senate Welcome for Mme. Chiang

"Mr. President, over the years billions of dollars of our taxpayers' money has been paid out to maintain Chiang Kai-shek. Now Mme. Chiang is in this country. . . . The most fantastic proposal that he has made recently, and no doubt Mme. Chiang will make in speeches and in talks with any government officials who will listen to her, is that we invite some of Chiang's 600,000 troops to participate in the Vietnamese war. . . . It would be a stupid and foolhardy policy on the part of the U.S. to permit even a token force of 100 of these troops to be transported to Vietnam. . . . The only thing accomplished would be to aggravate the rulers of Red China. . . . Of course some of the superduper war hawks in this country will echo Mme. Chiang's plea that the U.S. should immediately perpetrate a Pearl Harbor—engage in a day of infamy—by destroying Red China's crude nuclear installations. . . . The facts are that the Vietnamese regard the Chinese as their natural enemies. . . . In fact the troops of Chiang Kai-shek invaded Vietnam after World War II and looted and killed in the northern area of Vietnam."

—Young (D. Ohio) in the Senate Aug. 26.

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service to Johnson all the way back to that dubious count by which he first won election to the Senate, when Fortas by a successful appeal to Supreme Court Justice Black finally blocked a recount. But this does not alter the fact that the nominee made a brilliant record in the New Deal and a courageous record as a lawyer. Those of us who covered the dreadful days of the loyalty-security witch hunt in the late 40s and the China lobby onslaught in the 50s on the State Department via McCarran and McCarthy never dreamed that the lawyer who dared defend Dorothy Bailey, the victim of faceless informers, and Owen Lattimore, the No. 1 target of the anti-Communist paranoids, would some day be elevated to the Supreme Court. Those who want to sample the flavor of those bygone days can catch its full aroma in Senator Eastland's interrogation of Fortas which ranged all the way from association with the pre-war Southern Conference for Human Welfare, which was hounded out of existence, through the Hiss case to Lattimore's application last year at the passport division for permission to visit China. Fifteen years ago this would have made headlines and might have blocked the appointment; this year it passed almost unnoticed, along with Fortas's final letter to Eastland. In this the new Justice decided to forego the opportunity offered him by Eastland to "comment upon the record" of the hearing, i.e. to eat humble crow. "I should like to point out however," Fortas wrote, "that it is not merely the right of lawyers to defend unpopular causes, but also their duty." This is the first time in the history of the old Senate Judiciary Committee plantation that a judicial nominee has thumbed his nose at Old Marse Eastland.

Russell's Influence for Peace

The President who nominated Fortas to the Court, put Medicare through Congress, generalissimoed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and opened up the forbidden topic of birth control (with the assistance of Gruening, the only Senator bold enough to touch the subject) is obviously not Barry Goldwater. If he now succeeds in negotiating peace in Vietnam and giving the poor people of the Dominican Republic a free election, the polemical identification of LBJ with Goldwater by angry peaceniks like this writer will turn out to be history's No. 1 case of mistaken identity. We hope it does. After talking to trusted friends on Capitol Hill and trying soberly to catch up with events, it is good to report a change of atmosphere. A few months ago in the Johnson entourage there seemed to be the feeling that there was no alternative but to see the war through no matter how far that course might lead unless the other side backed down. Now the President himself has said the war cannot be won, that a peace must be negotiated, that the Viet Cong may have a place in the talks, and that we would accept elections; reunification has been mentioned publicly and coalition, it is said, discussed privately. Senators like Fulbright, virtually barred from the White House since he questioned the war last June, have been called in for consultation. On the Hill, where personal factors loom large and are perhaps overestimated, major credit for the shift in direction is given to Senator Russell of Georgia, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, long Johnson's mentor, and long dubious about the whole Vietnamese adventure.

Since his recovery from a serious illness, the Georgia patrician, perhaps the most respected man in the Senate, has thrown his influence on the side of negotiation. His August 1 appearance on *Face The Nation,* with its prediction that the war might easily cost $10 to $12 billion if escalation continues cast a chill on the cost-conscious White House, while

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When You Hunt Fleas With Sledgehammers

Saigon—U.S. Air Force B-52 bombers staged their 11th raid of the summer yesterday on suspected Viet Cong positions in South Vietnam, striking at Communists in the Zone D jungle 30 miles northeast of Saigon. . . . The raid was the fourth by B-52s since June 18 on the zone . . . the number of B-52s and the number of bombs was not disclosed."

—New York Herald-Tribune Aug. 27.

Saigon—The jungle where he was held prisoner four months by Viet Cong guerrillas was repeatedly bombed by U.S. and Vietnamese planes, Donald Charles Dawson said yesterday after his release. "Sometimes I could see the bombs spilling out of the bomb bays as the planes came in, but they never did register a direct hit," Mr. Dawson said. The 28-year old Californian was detained by the guerrillas in April when he walked into their territory in a vain search for the body of his brother, Lt. Daniel Dawson, 27, who was shot down in a light plane Nov. 6. When the bombers flew over, Mr. Dawson said, the prisoners were herded into underground shelters but the guards remained above ground, casually smoking cigarettes. The prison is in the much bombed Zone D outside Bien Hoa, which is 12 miles northeast of Saigon.

—Same paper, same day, same page.

The Happy-Go-Lucky Arithmetic For Estimating Enemy Casualties in Vietnam

"The number of Viet Cong bodies actually counted totalled 552. Another 50 dead were observed from the air. UPI quoted a Marine spokesman as saying 1,000 guerrillas had been wounded. In the past, estimates of the number of guerilla wounded have been made by doubling the number of dead."

—New York Herald-Tribune Aug. 20 of the Chulai battle.

"According to military authorities, the Air Force estimates the effects of its bombing attacks by a highly involved computation based on the area hit, the number of people that must have been in it, the number of bombs that should have landed in it. 'Then they put these two unknowns together, come up with an apparent "known," and ship the figure off weekly to Washington,' says one Saigon officer despairingly."

—Philip Geyelin in the Wall St. Journal Aug. 24.

"Saigon—American correspondents are wrangling with American military headquarters here over the release of casualty figures which some newsmen consider to be deliberately misleading. . . . At yesterday's briefing, for instance, a military statement announced a 'kill ratio' last week of 8.4 Viet Cong to one member of American or South Vietnamese forces. This ratio was described as the highest of the war. . . . Sharp questioning of a military spokesman by correspondents caused a U.S. Information Service official to chide the reporters for acting 'like certified public accountants.' But the questioning also led to a sharp reduction in the 'kill ratio'—down to three or four to one."

—Arnold Beichman in New York Herald-Tribune Aug. 26.

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North Vietnam and the Viet Cong Also Look for A "Key Signal"

By Sanford Gottlieb
Political Action Director, SANE

While Secretary of State Rusk is looking for the "key signal" from Hanoi which would bring the Vietnamese war to the conference table, Hanoi and the Viet Cong say they are looking for one from us. The signal they would like to receive is an act of military self-restraint by the U. S. such as an end to the bombing of North Vietnam. The National Liberation Front, the Viet Cong's parent organization, also suggests an end to the bombing of South Vietnam and a halt to further American troop reinforcements.

This conclusion is drawn from talks with North Vietnamese and NLF officials this summer in Algiers and Paris on behalf of SANE. I also visited South Vietnam as an adviser to the interdenominational group of clergymen on the fact-finding mission sponsored by the FOR. The statements made to me may, of course, mask prior decisions not to negotiate until there is a military victory or an improvement of the situation on the ground during the monsoon season. On the other hand, I doubt that we can be certain of the intentions of those we facelessly call "the other side" until the Administration is willing at least to stop the bombings of North Vietnam without conditions, ultimatums, or deadlines. For the Vietnamese Communists' distrust of the Administration is so deep and their perception of American political reality so distorted that professions of peaceful intent by President Johnson are greeted with derision and renewed appeals to the "large masses of (American) people of various walks of life" to demonstrate violently against the "cold-blooded murderers at the White House and the Pentagon." The quotation is from a letter addressed to American intellectuals by Nguyen huu Tho of the NLF.

How Hanoi Sees The Bombings

Deeds by Washington can perhaps overcome this communications barrier and convince Hanoi and the NLF that the Administration really wants a negotiated settlement. (Washington has been acting increasingly of late as if it had convinced itself, that it wants negotiations). The one deed unanimously emphasized by the independent observers with whom I met in France and Southeast Asia—French scholars, journalists and officials and Cambodian government advisers—was a complete halt to the bombings of North Vietnam. No proud nation (and the regime of Ho Chi Minh represents the only Asian people in modern times to win their freedom by militarily defeating a Western colonial power) will talk peace as the result of punishment through aerial bombardment. *In Hanoi's view, the U. S. is the aggressor in bombing North Vietnam and should take the first step simply by stopping.* Secretary Rusk has indicated he will not stop without a price. The North Vietnamese have been asked to withdraw the elements of their 325th Division identified in South Vietnam or to take other tangible reciprocal action.* The bombing of North Vietnam by the most powerful nation in the world is of dubious military value but of great political and psychological importance. Can't we afford to take the small military risk involved in the hope of political gain?

*** Hanoi radio as if in reply has just denied that the 325th is in South Vietnam. Ed.**

Navy Aviators Dislike Bombing North

Grumblings about the value of air attacks upon North Vietnam were reported in the New York Herald-Tribune (Aug. 29) by its correspondent, Arnold Beichman, aboard the USS Midway in the South China Sea. Beichman said the Midway alone had lost 12 pilots over North Vietnam and that more than 60 aircraft have reportedly been lost in these strikes. "When the military look above the 17th parallel," Beichman cabled, "they see little but high risk and low return." The feeling seems to be that the rate of loss would be justified only if there were to be a ground invasion of the North or if the Air Force were allowed to bomb major industrial targets and cities. Beichman reported that the aviators preferred strikes against South Vietnam where ground troops can follow up and where "there is less anti-aircraft fire."

If the two sides were to begin negotiating, what would they discuss? That question can now be answered in some detail. Hanoi has been clarifying its position through intermediaries, and Washington has begun to elaborate concrete negotiating positions. The two have been discussing at long range the basis on which talks could take place. A major step forward was taken when the Administration was convinced that the four points outlined in April by North Vietnamese Foreign Minister Pham Van Dong were being posed "in principle" rather than as preconditions. The significance of this diplomatic subtlety can be seen as it applies to the withdrawal of the U. S. forces. If the withdrawal of all foreign troops is agreed upon "in principle," the negotiators can work out the details. If, on the other hand, withdrawal of U. S. troops were being demanded *before* talks could begin there would be no talks.

Pham Van Dong's four points can be divided into two: the principles of the 1954 Geneva Accords, and an NLF-dominated coalition government in Saigon. Washington has evolved in recent months toward acceptance of the principles of Geneva—the independence and sovereignty of Vietnam; peaceful reunification of the divided country; removal of foreign military forces and bases, and a prohibition against military alliance. The coalition in Saigon will remain the major obstacle facing the negotiators, the problem of creating a government which reflects today's realities. The NLF is holding open 11 seats for the "unrallied" elements in addition to the 31 on their executive group, I was told in Algiers. This is presumably the Front's version of a coalition. It is certainly not Washington's and Saigon's. Washington has belatedly discovered that there are non-Communists in the NLF and is looking to them in any coalition. Washington is also belated in discovering the room to maneuver it possesses because of subtle but visible differences in approach between Hanoi and the NLF. Hanoi lays heavy stress on the principle of reunification, while the Front maintains that it wants to avoid domination by the North and that reunification can take as long as 20 years. If the NLF means what it says, the creation of a new coalition in Saigon may be a less staggering task than it now appears. Nevertheless, the present Saigon regime, representing few Southerners beyond the armed forces, may balk at the whole idea. And the Administration's domestic critics on the Right have not yet been heard from.

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Another Way of Looking at the Question of National Honor

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the State Department was thrown into a dither by his calm estimate that Ho Chi Minh would probably win a plebiscite today. "Whenever the people go to calling their leader Uncle," Russell said shrewdly of "Uncle" Ho, "you had better look out." But considerations of fiscal prudence and strategic sobriety weigh more heavily with Russell than humanity. For in his Sept. 6 interview with *U.S. News & World Report,* Russell can callously say that stepped-up bombing to cut supply lines "and increase the misery of the civilian population in the North" represents the best chance to bring Ho to the conference table. This reliance on terror from the skies, this inability to understand the psychology of a colonial struggle, is a heartless blindspot.

Their Misery and Our Profits

The Vietnamese can stand more misery more easily than our business community can stand the prospect of the mobilization and the price controls that further escalation of the war entails. The key to the shift toward peace lies in the fact that the business community, enjoying record profits, is in no mood to shut off the boom for the sake of a distant struggle in Southeast Asia. The guerrillas have won in the sense that the U.S. now recognizes that it cannot win the war militarily either on the ground or from the air, but must negotiate. The other side must also realize, however, that the U.S. can afford to hold on to the cities and the coastal enclaves for years, burning up much of the country in the process. The stalemate points to the peace table, but the path to it is rendered difficult by the intense and justifiable suspicion on the other side. Our government and its well-heeled undercover men have cheated on every agreement it has made in Southeast Asia since 1954, in Vietnam, in Laos and in Cambodia. The rebels will not lay down their arms to resume the same old comedy in the name of a Geneva agreement we did not honor before and have not explicitly promised to uphold in the future. Those who speak of upholding our national honor should look to this record of trickery. Some people believe honor lies in keeping our word; others that it consists of burning up other people's villages. Negotiations, if they begin, will center around the makeup of a new coalition government in the South. This may take months and the war hawks will take advantage of every bogdown to try and start up the fighting again.

Mme. Chiang's arrival and the newly projected visit of her son and Defense Minister for consultations with McNamara show that the desperadoes sense the danger of a settlement. De Gaulle is right in insisting that this must include China. Peking's admission to the UN and the end of our trade embargo would not only give China a motive for peace but stabilize the Far East. Mansfield's new speech at press time "Narrowing the Issues" and the unusual action of the White House in at once endorsing it, are the latest signs of substance in the new hope for peace. Six months ago Mansfield spoke only for a despairing handful in the Senate. *Sept. 1*

Brazil's Dictator and JFK's Memory

The affection in which the memory of the late President Kennedy is held in Latin America is a national asset not lightly to be cast away. Robert F. Kennedy will be helping to destroy it by his trip to Brazil. For thoughtful Latin Americans, the seizure of power by the military in that country last year and the instant welcome given the coup d'etat by Johnson and Rusk signalled the end of the hopes Kennedy had aroused. To speak before the purged and intimidated Brazilian Congress Nov. 22, the anniversary of the Kennedy assassination, would be to lend the magic of the Kennedy name to a military dictatorship which stands for all the evils the Alliance for Progress was intended to eliminate. The final touch would be for Kennedy to accompany Castelo Branco, the military dictator, on a tour of the poverty-stricken northeast. If Robert Kennedy wants to understand the depth of the reaction he invites, let him read the bitter and despairing interview given Le Monde (July 31) by Miguel Arraes, the enlightened and exiled governor of Pernambuco. Brazil, he told Le Monde, has been "handed over to the military-industrial complex of the United States." This ugly oligarchic regime, a medley of militarism, McCarthyism and rightist Catholicism, has become our pet ward in the hemisphere. It is Montalvo Frei in Chile, whom the State Department distrusts, who deserves a hand from Kennedy, not Castelo Branco.

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